

## Alternative Methods Help Progressive Community Integrate Landfills Into Sustainable Waste Management Program

WHEN OFFICIALS IN Washington's King County realized that effectively managing their Cedar Hills Regional Landfill was key to controlling the cost of waste disposal for county residents until a satisfactory alternative management option emerged, HDR presented the county with a "MOM" strategy.

MOM works like this:

- **Maximize** the life of the existing landfill by adding capacity via increased permitted airspace
- **Optimize** the landfill by making the best use of currently available airspace by increasing density to the greatest extent possible
- **Minimize** capital and operating expenses using innovative and sustainable elements

### MOM'S THOUGHTFUL ALTERNATIVES SAVE SPACE AND COST

Perhaps it's not quite correct to claim that landfills are as American as apple pie, but they are a key component in solid waste management systems across the nation. As engineers, including solid waste experts at HDR, work to refine alternative ways to manage waste, landfills remain an essential component in an integrated waste management system.

In fact, when HDR began advising King County about *maximizing* what they have, a list of 30 options provided the starting point. The HDR team evaluated each of these options with both broad and focused screening processes based on the specific needs and expectations of King County.

Through the screening process, HDR helped King County narrow the alternative list down to five options that would extend the useful life of the Cedar Hills Landfill from a range of three to 13 years. King County estimates showed that selecting one of the five options will save ratepayers more than \$17 million each year that the life of landfill can be extended.

### MEETING THE TRIPLE BOTTOM LINE

The focused alternatives screening process used weighted rating criteria that incorporated the triple bottom line of economic, environmental and social considerations. Satisfying elements across these three areas is a key factor for community leaders in King County and across the nation. King County expects that the results from the HDR-focused screening process can be combined with public input on an ongoing environmental review of each alternative to ultimately select a preferred alternative that will *"M"aximize* the Cedar Hills Landfill. □

